

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3201

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1236

LIMDIS

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY SHAHI MADE TRIP BACK FROM LAHORE, WHERE HE WAS WITH BHUTTO PLANNING FOR LAHORE CONFERENCE, TO GIVE DINNER FOR THE HELMS' WHICH WAS PROCEEDED BY BUSINESS TALK SOMEWHAT OVER AN HOUR.
 2. CONVERSATION WAS GENERAL, BUT I THINK QUITE USEFUL. A LARGE PORTION OF THE TIME WAS DEVOTED TO THE CURRENT OIL SITUATION AND SHAHI DID NOT PRESS ON ISSUE OF MILITARY SUPPLY TO THE EXTENT I THOUGHT HE WOULD. I WOULD GUESS THAT HE IS LEAVING THAT SUBJECT FOR BHUTTO AND AZIZ AHMED.
 3. SHAHI SEEMED CLEARLY CONCERNED THAT SOME HIGH LEVEL ATTENDANTS AT UP-COMING ISLAMIC CONFERENCE MIGHT NOT MATERIALIZE. HE MENTIONED PARTICULARLY IRAN AND JORDAN, AND THERE SEEMS SOME CONCERN OVER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEISAL AND KING HUSAYN. HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT KING HASSAN
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AS WELL AND THERE WAS SOME SPECULATION THAT HE WAS AFRAID

TO FLY. (IN AN ASIDE WITH HIM AFTER THE TALK WAS OVER I ASKED IF HE REALLY WAS CONCERNED THAT THE WHOLE CONFERENCE MIGHT BE IN JEOPARDY. HE SAID HE DID NOT THINK SO, BUT SHOWED OBVIOUS CONCERN ABOUT THE SHAH. HE SAID THEY HAD RECEIVED AN ACCEPTANCE FROM THE SHAH BUT THAT HAD BEEN FOLLOWED BY SAUDI AMBASSADOR SAYING SHAH WAS STILL HESITANT ABOUT COMING, PARTLY BECAUSE OF NECESSARY ASSOCIATION HERE WITH PEOPLE LIKE QADHAFI. THE LATTER IS CAUSING CONSTERNATION HERE BY WANTING STATE VISIT BEGINNING ON FEBRUARY 19 IN THE MIDST OF ALL THE PRE-CONFERENCE TURMOIL.)

4. THE DISCUSSION TURNED TO THE WORLD OIL CRISIS WITH SHAHI BLAMING THE SHAH FOR CARRYING THE LEADING PART IN THE OIL PRICE RISE. HELMS SPOKE IN DETAIL AS TO WHAT HAD ACTUALLY HAPPENED AT THE OPEC MEETING ON DECEMBER 22-23, AND HOW COMPROMISE PRICE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. (HELMS SUGGESTED THAT I NEED NOT REPORT HIS REMARKS IN DETAIL AS ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ALREADY IN DEPARTMENT FROM HIS OWN PREVIOUS REPORTING.) HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE OTHERS PRESENT WHO TOOK THE VIEW THAT THE PRICE SHOULD BE MUCH HIGHER THAN FINALLY AGREED UPON. HE SAID HE DID NOT THINK IT REALLY TRUE THAT THE SHAH HAD BEEN THE LEADER IN THE PRICE RISE SITUATION, ALTHOUGH HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONCEPT ON WHICH THE RAISE WAS BASED. HE SPECULATED, HOWEVER, THAT IT MIGHT BE TRUE THAT THE SHAH WOULD END UP BEING THE LEADER AGAINST ANY REDUCTION. HE SAID THAT WHAT THE SHAH SEEMED TO BE AFTER WAS TO EQUATE THE PRICE OF OIL EITHER TO THE COSTS OF ALTERNATE SOURCES OF ENERGY OR WITH IMPORT PRICES OF GOODS AND SUPPLIES. ON THE SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN CURRENT PRICES, HELMS SAID HE WOULD BE LESS THAN A FRIEND OF PAKISTAN IF HE LEFT THEM OPTIMISTIC ON THAT SCORE AS HIS OWN PERSONAL

OPINION WAS THAT PRICES WOULD NOT GO DOWN IN THE SHORT RUN. THIS CAME WITH OBVIOUS DISAPPOINTMENT TO SHAHI.

5. SHAHI SAID THE FRENCH PROPOSAL OR EVEN THE BOUMEDIENE PROPOSAL OBVIOUSLY HAD APPEAL TO A PLACE LIKE PAKISTAN AS THEY THOUGHT A WORLD CONFERENCE IN SOME FORUM WOULD BECOME NECESSARY. THE LDC'S BY THEMSELVES JUST DO NOT HAVE
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THE LEVERAGE TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE. HE SAID THEY COULD HOPE, OR EVEN TALK INDIVIDUALLY TO PEOPLE LIKE THE SHAH, BUT IN THE END THERE WAS BOUND TO BE A COMBINED UPROAR FROM THEM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. HE SAID BHUTTO WAS TRYING TO DECIDE WHAT MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE CORRIDORS AT LAHORE AND THAT HE HAD WRITTEN PRESIDENT NIXON A LETTER ON THE MATTER.

6. THE DISCUSSION TURNED TO THE GENERAL QUESTION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS WITH FOCUS, OF COURSE, ON INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN. AS THESE SUBJECTS ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL COME UP AGAIN AT A HIGHER LEVEL, WILL HOLD REPORTING UNTIL AFTER FURTHER TALKS HERE. AS DISCUSSIONS WITH AZIZ AHMED AND BHUTTO WILL BOTH BE CONSECUTIVE AT VERY END OF HELMS STAY HERE, IT MAY TURN OUT BEST THAT I ATTEMPT A GENERAL ROUND-UP AFTER HIS DEPARTURE. IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS GOOD INDEED TO HAVE HELMS AND FAMILY WITH US HERE IN THE ABODE OF ISLAM.
BYROADE

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